

Midd-West Literacy Team

Developing a “consistent” district writing program...

Names (group members):

In your group, please discuss and provide information on the following areas/questions. Use additional paper if necessary! 😊

1. What is your vision of a “consistent district writing” program?

- K-12 (teachers, buildings, district)
- Students need a personal connection
- It should be a building process for each year with mastery at each level.
- Consistent expectations that build per grade level
- Instruction of a writing *process* – progressive from K-12.
- Consistency in organizing, planning, and the process – including common terminology
- Organizer that is used across the district
- Accountability for each step
- TIME needs to be implemented for it.
- Consider Summer Writing to go along with Summer Reading
- Targets to explore across the curriculum – integrated study
- Portfolios
- Periodic review and updating – ongoing development
- Have a writing curriculum separate from language arts/reading

2. Per grade level (in your group), identify the writing skills students should have mastered upon entering the classroom. Please indicate the grade level.

- K-4
- **4th Grade:** Write complete sentences, topic sentences, three related details with explanations/details and closing (paragraph)
- **5th Grade:**
 - Write a 5 sentence paragraph with intro, three details, and conclusion
 - Sentence type/punctuation rules/paragraph structure
 - Ability to utilize organizer to guide writing
- **6th Grade:**
 - Should be able to produce five (5) paragraph essay
 - Should be able to produce the three (3) types of essay per state testing

- **7th Grade:**
 - All of the above
 - Ability to use figurative language
- **8th Grade:**
 - Use and write with proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure to enable 8th grade teachers to take intermediate writing to sophisticated writing using voice and style.
 - Write with complexity (know transitional words and use complex sentences correctly)
 - Know the process from start to finish
 - Be able to use an organizer without instruction on *how* to use it
 - Write a multi-paragraph paper (proper formatting)
 - Know terminology of writing and writing process

3. What are your thoughts on Kid Writing to Writer's workshop? Ideas?

- Kid Writing – good foundation
- Writer's Workshop – only way to go!
- Teach students to write independently (strategies) so they “want” to write

4. How would you use “set units of study” in writing? If you already use set units of study, identify / describe what you use.

- Interdisciplinary
- Persuasive, Informative, Expository, Narrative
- Poetry
- Biography
- Autobiography
- Creative – descriptive
- Memoir
- Fiction / Non-fiction
- Writer's Notebook
 - Show examples
 - Introduce literacy examples
 - Author's works
- Portfolios

5. In developing a writing program, what are your NON-negotiables?

- Time for conferencing
- Daily writing
- Grade level consistency
- Consider the # of students and the limits of the day -- the element of time!
- Don't want “mandated” prompts that take away from creativity

AREAS of CONCERN:

- Number of students / essays to score and grade adequately. Some teachers have 125+ students, and appropriate/timely feedback is very difficult to do. No time for conferencing.
- When should students be able think *abstractly*?
- What to do when a student is struggling, has not mastered skills per grade level, and falls behind?

That's as far as we could go before we opened it up to whole group discussion which took on a life of its own! ☺